

## the day after

Autumn Thompson

my eyes squint in the blinding light of the early afternoon sun  
bottles all across the counter  
a spilled drink on the coffee table  
half-eaten cardboard pizza, still in its box as if it was just delivered  
my favorite plant knocked over—her soil litters the ground like confetti  
it might as well be

i sit in the silence that weighs  
no voices shout to change the song, footsteps stumbling in suit to reach the  
remote  
laughter echoes in the walls of my two-bedroom apartment  
no strangers shouting up from the ground floor, raising their respective  
completely non-suspicious fast food cups in our direction  
no drunken dancing, twirling, spinning two-step to some song i don't quite  
remember the words to

no  
today it is just me  
surrounded by ghosts shaped as littered blankets and the bodies taking the  
form of red plastic cups they left behind  
i am filled with an odd sensation  
a warmth that fills me more completely than the alcohol ever could  
sinking into the couch, i notice the way the pillows are arranged  
there is nothing more human than celebration

celebration of what?  
i'm not too sure  
friendship? old times? memories of days not so long past?  
it doesn't matter  
i glance at the vacuum that looms in the corner  
not yet  
maybe just a few more minutes  
then  
i'll sweep up the memories from many long nights past  
and put them away for safe keeping

**Autumn Thompson** is a third-year biology student on the pre-professional health plan with a minor in psychology and nutrition. Writing started as a once-in-a-while hobby in high school, and now she continues to write as a way to express herself and to interpret the human experience.